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U.S. Public Health Service

A square deal for the boy
in industry

Washington

1920

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A Square Deal
For
The Boy in Industry

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For Those Interested in Work with Boys



ISSUED BY THE
UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THE KEEPING FIT EXHIBIT.

A FATHER:

"It was worth \$500 to my boy."

A TEACHER:

"The exhibit should be seen by every high-school boy and employed boy in the country."

AN EMPLOYER:

"Just the stuff every boy should have."

AN EDITOR:

"We are struck with the timeliness of this program."

A WORKER WITH BOYS:

"It has helped boys at the most critical period of their lives."

A BOY:

"The Keeping Fit material is fine. It helped me to have greater respect for women."

(2)

A SQUARE DEAL FOR THE BOY IN INDUSTRY.

During the past two years State boards of health and various interested agencies, with the assistance of the United States Public Health Service, have reached over a million boys and young men between the ages of 14 and 20 with educational material on the subject of physical fitness. From an exhibit, lantern slides, and a special pamphlet, these boys have learned lessons which have been of real assistance to them during adolescence and which will help them throughout life.

But of those who have seen the exhibit and read the pamphlet, only a comparatively small number have been boys in industry. The great army of boys in workshops and factories, in fields, in commerce, and trade has hitherto been almost entirely ignored. It has been easier to reach those in the high schools, and for no better reason attention has been centered there. Thus the very ones who most need the lessons which the exhibit and pamphlet teach have been neglected. Is this giving the boy in industry a square deal?

WHAT THE BOYS IN INDUSTRY HAVE MISSED.

The "Keeping Fit" material (exhibits, lantern slides, and pamphlets) was prepared by the Government for boys between 14 and 20, irrespective of their training or experience. All agencies working with older boys have been invited to make use of this material. It is interesting enough for the college man and simple enough for the older boy who has not finished grammar school. Those who have seen it are enthusiastic about it. Many boys have declared that it awakened them as nothing else had done to the need for wise exercise, wholesome food, fresh air, and sufficient sleep. In particular it showed them the value of clean living. "If everyone who saw the 'Keeping Fit' exhibit and read the pamphlet received as much help as I did," wrote one boy, "the exhibit accomplished its purpose nobly."

Principals of high schools where the exhibit was displayed declare that it resulted in much good among their students and plan to make the exhibit a yearly event.

In so far as the boy in industry has not been given an equal opportunity to see the "Keeping Fit" material, he is not getting a square deal.

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THE FIVE MILLION BOYS IN INDUSTRY.

The 1910 census reported 4,968,762 boys under 21 years of age in gainful occupations. The 1920 census when completed will add a sufficient number to make the total well over 5,000,000. The army of working boys exceeds considerably the Army which America mobilized for the World War.

A recent registration of all boys 16, 17, and 18 years of age in New York State indicates over 300,000 boys of these ages. Of this number 265,000 are in industry and only 35,000 in school.

When the 600,000 high-school boys of the country settle down to their studies at 9 o'clock every morning 5,000,000 boys have already been at work from one to three hours. These boys are an important cog in the wheel of our industrial life.

You may not realize how many boys in your own community are at work. These boys are not playing baseball or football, or giving school yells. Nevertheless they are taking an active part in the life of the community. Perhaps there is no particular industry which employs boys. Perhaps you do not know of a single factory where any large number are to be found. But scattered through many miscellaneous industries these boys are at work and they demand your attention fully as much as do those of whose presence you have been more often aware.

WHERE THE BOYS OF INDUSTRY ARE FOUND.

Boys are to be found in all kinds of industry and are distributed widely among the following occupational groups:

- (1) *Agriculture*: Farming dairying, stock raising, etc.
- (2) *Mining*: Coal, iron, copper, gold, silver.
- (3) *Manufacturing and mechanical industries*: Including iron and steel, metal, lumber, and furniture, textile, tanneries, food industries, canneries, etc. (skilled and unskilled).
- (4) *Transportation*: Water and rail, merchant marine.
- (5) *Trades*: Apprentices in skilled trades, bank clerks, delivery boys, newsboys, street trades, etc.
- (6) *Public service*: Government messenger service, Western Union, sailors, marines, soldiers.
- (7) *Domestic and personal service*: Bootblacks, elevator and bell boys, chore boys, butlers, errand, bundle, and cash boys, office boys, clerical occupations—stenographers, etc.

THEIR NEED.

It is no reflection on the boys in industry to say that they would profit especially from the "Keeping Fit" program. High-school boys have many advantages in comparison. The atmosphere in which

most high-school boys live is wholesome. Their life is comparatively protected. Not so the boy in industry. He does not so often have the wise guidance of parent or teacher. He faces the world as it is—the good and the bad of it. He comes in contact with all kinds of men and women. In his leisure hours he is not so generously provided with wholesome forms of recreation. To a large extent he must find his amusements for himself. With more spending money than the ordinary high-school boy and less capacity for the higher enjoyments of life, his pleasures tend toward a lower plane. Greater temptations are placed in his way, and he is not as well protected against them.

Solely from the economic point of view the boy in industry needs the "Keeping Fit" material. The unhealthy worker is often the inefficient worker. An employer pays in dollars and cents for the ignorance of his employee concerning health matters; the boy himself pays in failure to make use of all his potentialities. He represents a loss of man power as well as a loss of manhood.

Need this neglect of the boy in industry continue? There are unusual difficulties, it is true, which have handicapped efforts in the past. But these difficulties are not insuperable. To the man really interested they are but a challenge.

THE FIRST STEP TO REACH THE BOYS IN INDUSTRY.

First find out where the boys of your community are working.

This information can often be secured from State industrial reports or from a survey of the local community by a committee. In many places the man in charge of working permits can supply the names of boys who have secured permits during the last few years. Vocational or continuation schools, evening schools, labor registration bureaus, manufacturers' associations, merchants' associations, labor unions, and other agencies familiar with the industrial situation of the community are in a position to give valuable information. When the manufacturing and commercial establishments have been catalogued, do not forget that large numbers of boys may be employed in agriculture.

A COMMUNITY PLAN.

After securing data as to where and how the boys are employed, the next step is the formulation of a community plan. In many instances this can best be done through the organization of an executive committee made up of representatives from various interested agencies. Such a committee can plan the campaign as a whole and avoid the danger of duplication of effort.

The following list of agencies should be in a position to participate effectively:

- Boys' Club federations.
- Boy Scouts.
- Churches.
- Knights of Columbus.
- Lodges.
- Red Cross chapters.
- Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs.
- School authorities, particularly evening and continuation schools.
- Settlements.
- Sunday school associations.
- Welfare departments in factories and commercial establishments.
- Young Men's Christian Associations.
- Young Men's Hebrew Associations.

RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH AGENCY.

Each of the agencies which have been mentioned can make itself responsible for reaching a certain number of boys. Young Men's Christian Associations, Sunday schools, boys' clubs, and settlements have a clientele which can be reached quite easily, once the director or leader is interested. The large factory or department store where many boys are employed forms another natural group. Whether a welfare department exists or not, it should be possible to convince the manager or director of the plant that a presentation of the "Keeping Fit" material will be of practical value in increasing efficiency, as well as in fitting the boys more effectively for later life. In evening and continuation schools it may be possible to introduce the "Keeping Fit" material as part of the regular work. Such groups already formed offer large opportunities for reaching the boys in industry.

THE UNSUPERVISED CLUB.

Large numbers of boys in industry belong to what may be termed "unsupervised clubs." This is especially true in cities where there is a large foreign population. In one eastern manufacturing city 28 such clubs, having a membership of 20 to 200, were found by one worker with boys. These clubs often start as athletic organizations and retain their original name after they have become in reality no more than a social club. A basement, upstairs room, or perhaps a complete building or floor is rented. These groups are self-governing and independent organizations.

The approach to the unsupervised club is not an easy one. Through some member it may be possible to secure an introduction

to the president or other influential member. Incidentally you may mention that the "Keeping Fit" exhibit is available free of cost and that the Government is anxious that this exhibit should be put before the club. It has been used by many clubs already. Never invite yourself to present the program. If they want you, they will ask you. Many boys in industry, from bootblack to bank clerk, belong to one or more of these clubs, and since oftentimes these clubs include boys who might otherwise be entirely neglected, the value of making use of these organizations is apparent.

THE LONE BOY.

The lone boy presents an unusually difficult problem: He is to be found in city and country alike. Such a boy does not belong to any gang or organization. He must be reached individually, if at all.

METHODS WHICH HAVE SUCCEEDED.

Concrete instances of what has already been accomplished are probably the best guides to the extension of this program among working boys. In some sections of the country a number of successful experiments have already been made.

TRAINING CORPS.

In New York State a commission has charge of the physical training of all boys 16, 17, and 18 years of age. These boys meet weekly in halls, armories, and schools. The commission has made it possible for representatives of the State board of health and other agencies to appear before these thousands of boys. Of the 300,000 who have registered for training only 35,000 attend school. The rest are in industry, so that approximately 90 per cent of the boys approached in this way could not be reached through schools.

CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

In Springfield, Ill., the exhibit was presented and the pamphlets distributed in the continuation schools. There has been a rapid increase in the number of these schools which provide boys already in industry with a certain amount of training each week. They furnish an approach of increasing importance.

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

The secretary for employed boys at the St. Paul, Minn., Young Men's Christian Association reports as follows:

We planned originally to run the "Keeping Fit" program for about a month, but the idea has spread so that nearly two months were consumed in reaching all groups interested. So far we have shown the exhibit before 50 different

groups and reached a total of 3,130 boys and young men. These groups vary in size from 17 to 275. We have shown the pictures on company time in 12 of the larger concerns. Two of the department stores have given suppers for their boys. We have also shown the exhibit in a business college, a settlement house, a boys' radio club. One night we went to a lodge meeting, the members of which were supervisors and foremen of the various railway shops in town. I showed the slides and had a wonderful opportunity to impress upon the men the importance of their influence with the boys who work under them.

In two instances we have shown the slides in large office buildings and have gathered in boys from various firms in the building, thus reaching the boys from the smaller offices.

We have shown the slides in dingy basements of factories, and then again in luxuriously furnished directors' rooms in banks. At the very outset of the campaign we gathered a group of post-office special delivery boys in the United States district court room. One day we had a group of boys who work in the stockyards of South St. Paul, and a day or so later met with an older boys' group in the leading Presbyterian church.

A HOTEL FOR YOUNG MEN.

In the Chicago Young Men's Christian Association Hotel, which houses from 1,500 to 1,800 transient boys and young men daily, the exhibit was displayed in the lobby. An automatic projector or stereomograph was used. This attracted thousands of boys and young men.

GIVEN WITH WORKING PERMIT.

The law which requires boys under a certain age to secure a working permit before beginning work affords a good opportunity for the distribution of "Keeping Fit" material. This practice has already been inaugurated in some places. By such a method it is possible to take care of the constant draft of recruits for industry at the psychological moment when they are starting work.

HOW TO SHOW THE "KEEPING FIT" EXHIBIT AND SLIDES.

The "Keeping Fit" program is an attempt to provide boys between 14 and 20 with sound information regarding physical fitness. To accomplish this an exhibit, a set of lantern slides, and an accompanying pamphlet have been prepared.

The exhibit is made up of a set of 24 cards, 22 by 28 inches in size, most of which contain two subjects. Many of the illustrations are in color. The material of the exhibit is also available in a set of 50 lantern slides.

The showing of the exhibit does not involve any great difficulties. A physician's knowledge is not required. The cards or slides speak for themselves, and the only reason for any remarks whatsoever is to give the right setting and to leave the right impression. It is important to follow the instructions carefully. The minimum standard for anyone presenting this material to boys is a good character.

If practicable, a short introductory talk of three to five minutes, as suggested, may be given before showing either the cards or slides. Neither in the introduction nor concluding remarks should attention be directed to sex hygiene or venereal diseases. While it is important to maintain a dignified attitude throughout, a story in the introductory remarks has much value, as it relieves any tension which may exist.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE FOR INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

(A) Every boy and young man has an ambition to be in fine physical condition. Illustrate. Theodore Roosevelt, when a boy, was a weak, puny chap, but early in life determined to become strong physically. He realized his ambition.

(B) The State boards of health and United States Public Health Service, together with many other agencies interested in health, are eager to assist you in your ambition during the most critical years of your life. They have prepared at considerable expense exhibits and pamphlets showing how most any boy can achieve a high degree of physical fitness.

(C) The importance of physical fitness—necessary not only for proficiency in athletics, but also for efficiency in business, science, and life's activities, for personal happiness and the welfare of the race.

(D) The exhibit to be shown has been seen by over a million boys and young men in all parts of the country. Boys have expressed themselves, after seeing the exhibit, in no uncertain terms as to its value. They have declared that it has given them new ideas of life and cleared up a number of misunderstandings.

(E) No remarks will be made while the pictures are being shown. You are asked to refrain from comments and questions until after seeing the whole exhibit.

(If disrespect is shown by any of the boys during the showing of the cards or slides, it indicates that the person in charge has not created the right attitude and is probably not adapted to this work.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE WITH CARD EXHIBIT.

1. Secure as large and quiet a room as possible with plenty of light and wall space.

2. Each box contains full set of 24 cards. Take out screws in end of box and pull cards out carefully to avoid tearing.

3. Arrange cards on wall in numerical order. (See numbers on cards.)

(a) (Put up cards in pairs, four subjects to a pair.) Top of cards should be about 6 feet from floor. *Be sure to separate each pair of cards by 6 to 10 feet in order to avoid congestion in viewing cards.*

(b) Always indicate, by conspicuous directions, that exhibit should be viewed from left to right.

(c) If a clear wall is not available, a frame-work can be easily constructed covered with burlap, compo, or heavier board. Cards can be hung with card holders or thumb tacks.

4. Insist on boys being quiet while viewing exhibit.

5. Have sufficient "Keeping Fit" pamphlets ready to insure each boy's receiving one. These can be secured gratis from State boards of health.

6. Lectures on venereal disease and sex hygiene should not be given in connection with exhibit. Introductory remarks as outlined on general health are sufficient. Neither the cards nor the slides need any explanation whatsoever.

SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE WITH SLIDES.

1. Each box contains 50 slides, numbered from 1 to 50. Be prepared with a tested lantern and have slides in the order as numbered ready to show.
2. Plan on about 25 minutes for showing slides. This allows an average of about 30 seconds for each slide. Give audience time to read the subject matter carefully. *Do not interject any remarks while slides are being shown.*

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

After showing the slides or cards the following statements may advantageously be made:

(A) The United States Public Health Service and the State board of health seek to enlist your aid in the campaign for physical fitness. They urge you to act on the suggestions which have been placed before you.

(B) If there are any points in the exhibit you do not understand, you will probably find them explained in a pamphlet which will be distributed as you leave the room. The pamphlets are printed by the Government and State boards of health at considerable expense.

If opportunity affords, follow up the slide exhibit with the card exhibit or vice versa. In most cases the subject matter is practically the same. A repetition, however, will make an additional appeal and give opportunity to read again any portions not fully understood.

THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM.

The success of the program depends upon the results achieved. Rivers and harbors are full of rocks. For safe navigation we install lighthouses or warning signals. The pilot can then steer his ship safely through the channel. The "Keeping Fit" program may be likened to a lighthouse which warns of danger and points out the safe course. Just as we do not know how many lives might have been lost if a lighthouse had not been provided, so in this "Keeping Fit" program we can not even estimate the great good which has already been accomplished in helping to keep boys and young men in the right channel.

The effectiveness of the lighthouse depends upon the way the light is kept up. The Public Health Service and State boards of health stand ready to assist local organizations interested in boys to carry the "Keeping Fit" program to the boys and young men in industry. With the concrete suggestions which have been made you can tackle the program in your own community. Employers, parents, and the boys themselves will thank you for bringing these lessons of physical fitness to them. Only when everything possible has been done to reach these 5,000,000 boys in industry with this material can it be said that they have been given a square deal.

STATE BOARDS OF HEALTH are in a position to loan copies of the exhibit to those who can use them effectively. They can also provide a set of lantern slides and a supply of the *Keeping Fit* pamphlet. Write your State board to-day or communicate for further assistance with—

UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
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